

**REMARKS****Rejections pursuant to 35 USC § 103**

The Examiner has rejected all pending independent claims as unpatentable over Zugibe (U.S. Pat. No. 5,802,859). Additionally, the remaining dependent claims have similarly been rejected as unpatentable over Zugibe alone or in further view of McCarrick et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,953,682). Namely, the Examiner states that Zugibe discloses both a “communication means” and a “controller means”. However, as described below, Zugibe does not actually disclose the “communication means”, nor the ‘connector’ associated therewith, of the present application.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the liquid handling system includes “a connector having a communication means and a controller means”. In this manner the dual functions of directing liquid flow from the container and regulating the information retrieved from and stored at the container, are coordinated through a single feature of the system ensuring accurate and real time information updating. This coordination of data flow and liquid flow through a single connector is illustrated by Fig. 3 of the pending application (also shown below). Zugibe, on the other hand, fails to disclose a connector as claimed in the present application. Rather Zugibe, at most, discloses a storage and communication means that is disassociated from both the controller means and the container itself. This in no way amounts to the level of coordinated, real-time information transfer and preservation at the container that is available in the present invention.

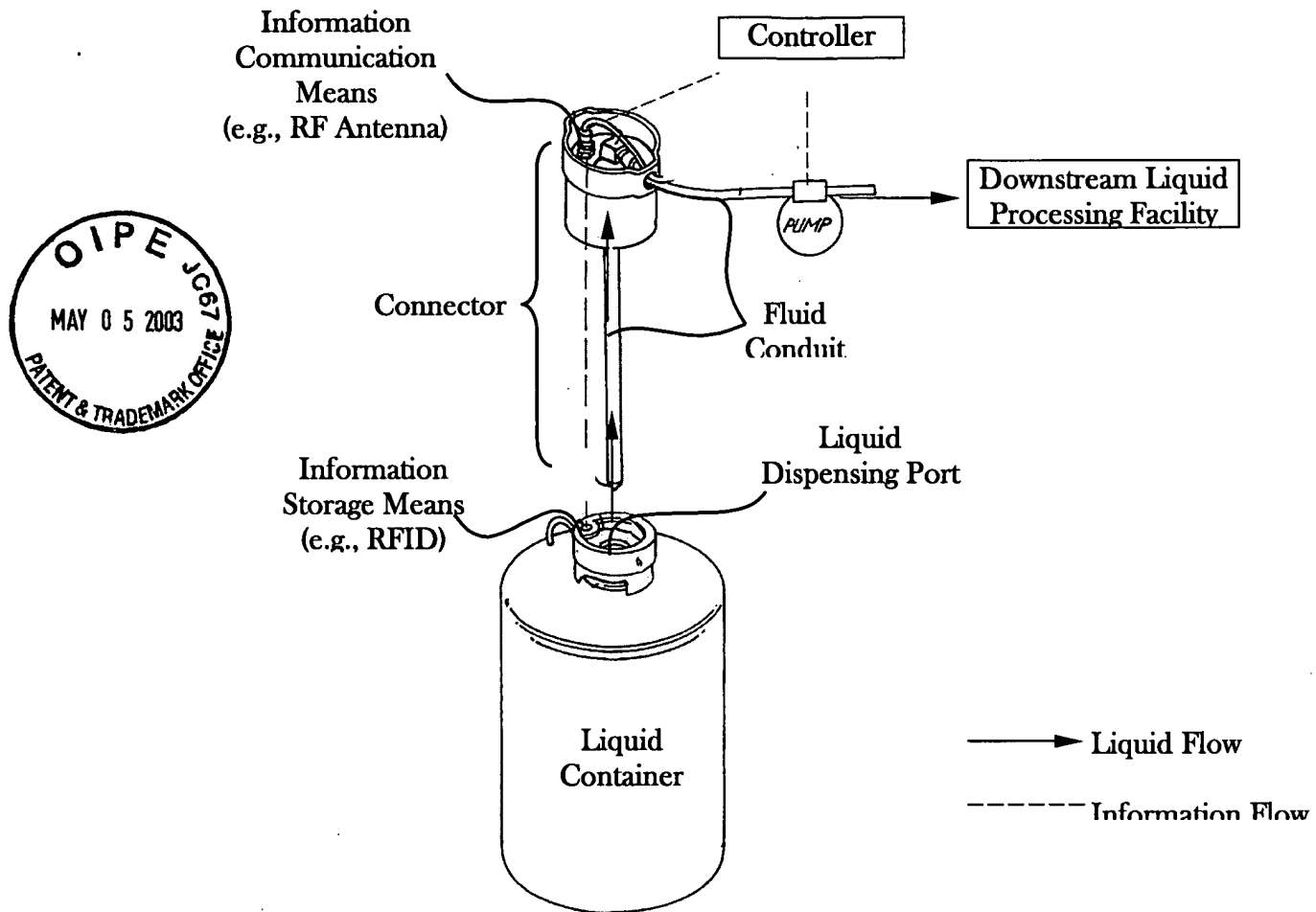


Fig. 3

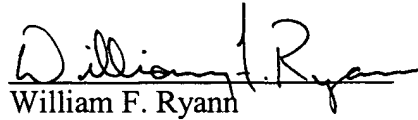
In addition to claim 1, remaining independent claims 11, 16, 20 and 25 have similarly been amended to clarify the coordination of features through a single “connector” as shown in the Fig. 3 above. All other remaining claims are dependent from these referenced claims. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests removal of rejections pursuant to 35 USC § 103.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-31 are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at (203) 794-1100 should this be seen as helpful in prosecution of this application.

Applicant does not believe that any fee is due in connection with the foregoing.  
However, any deficiencies may be charged to the deposit account 50-0860.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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